

A Caveat, for my Countrey-men in General, the Assessors and Collectors of Publick Taxes, in Particular.

Most Dear Countrey-men,

I Dayly hear the Groanes of some of you Perishing, others Despairing, all Languishing; Yet, methinks, I cannot afford you such Pity as the sadness of your Condition might seem to challenge. Can we pity one, who being tormented with a sharp Gout, will not forbear French Wine and saltmeats? Such, if I have sense, is your Case: Your disease cannot well be subdued by strong Physick, but may soon be starved: Diet is your onely medicine: Keep, in Gods name, your hands from your mouths, and expect his blessing upon your sobriety and Patience. Your money is your Poyson: Therefore forbear contributing against your selves. Do this, Or you do nothing, Without it, your Addresses are ridiculous, your declaring is prepo-

sterous, And your Arming will be, most of all, pernicious; What care they for your words, so long as they have your Pur-ses still open? Stop that source, and they will soon feel it, though they cannot resent it, to your Prejudice; The worst they can do, is to distrain, perhaps rife some few, for terrour, who, suffering in a common cause, ought, in Equity and prudence, to be reimbursed from a Common Stock: And, if you must be assessed, that way, let it go. What means can you propound to redeem your selves, so cheap, so safe, so certain? If, yet, you will not pursue this wholsom and necessary advice, I call God to witness, You are not worthy of Liberty, or Peace; And pity it were, you should be relieved with the heart-blood of honest, and brave men, who will not venture the Paring of your own Nayles.

Trie now, whether the Red-Coats will yet add to their insolencies, that of universal Rapine. Possibly, they may beware, possibly they may relent; Whether any Judge or Jury will assert so lame an Authority, Where the tenth Part of a Parliament, (owning the Exclusion of the other nine, by meer force, without cause shewn, or pretended,) assumes not onely the Authority of an Entire Parliament, but a power to act above all Law, or precedent, and against common Right, rather as absolute Lords, then Representatives, and trustees of the people; Whereas, it is the grand fundamental of ours, and, indeed, of all Laws, That the forcible exclusion of any one Member vacates all proceedings, during the force, As doth appear by the case of the Excluded Members, lately published at large, To which I referre you, for full satisfaction in the premises.

Of Juries, I am very Confident, And of the Reverend Judges, methinks, I cannot but hope well, Their wisdom seeming, every way, equally concerned with their Justice, They will, I doubt not, remember the Cases of *Tressilian*, and *Shipmoney*, both infinitely short of this. However, the worst that can be feared, is but for a few to loose that in gross, which, else, they, and all of us must look in a short time, to part with by retails, The Gangreen Poverty creeping apace from joynt to joynt.

Our Grandees will, perhaps, endeavour to amuse you, by filling up their house, their own Way; Yer so, as to make sure of continuing their own Power, and your grievances. For do not think, their Interest can consist with your Ease; But, for Gods sake, Is it not the same Oppression, Whether by these alone, Or these with others, constituted, qualified, limited, and finally awed by them? Is this a free Parliament, to command your purses, or a mist cast before your eyes, whilst your pockets are picked? I trust, After so many experiences, your understandings are, by this time, more refined, then to be so grossely imposed upon.

In five Moneths time (for, so long their last Session continued,) they swallowed a whole Years Assessement of 50000 *l.* Monthly, Besides the project of the *Militia*, which, under another name, (a stale imposture) amounted to a full Tax; Yet, as *Pharaoh's* lean Kine, having devoured the fat, did not thrive, so, all this being disposed of, in a trice, and the Exchequer left empty, During the late *Interregnum*, the Army, being unpay'd, lay upon Face-quarter, as if no Taxes had been levied, And the Souldiers, in many places, extorted what they pleased from the Countrey, with all the Licentiousness of an Actual war; Yet, now (their years Assessement not expiring these four moneths,) they have, it seems, the Confidence already, to double our files, (for the Bill, I hear, is engrossed,) with a monthly Tax of a 100000 *l.* for six moneths; But, withal, I suppose, they will have the Modesty, not to tell us, When this Vast burthen shall cease, Or that the next shall not yet advance, as their Occasions, (the Rule and measure of our property) probably may. A hopeful, and comfortable Introduction of our freedom.

Some Hotspurs will, perhaps, incite you to assert your Liberties by Tumults; But, believe it, this advice comes from *Westminster*, where they long, and lie at lurch for such advantages, that, hitting the blots you make, they may support themselves with your spoyles, (the onely hope of subsisting now left them;) Consult not therefore with your Enemies, Consider the Ruinous fate of Plots and Insurrections, Remember Mr. *Gerard*, Sir *Henry Slingsby*, Dr. *Hewet*, and Sir *George Booth*, most of them, evidently trepanned. Your Game is sure, if you list your selves, And will you venture it at Dice, among the Rookes? Be advised, Hold your Pursestrings, (A Counsel, one would think, to most men plausible enough) Nothing can so certainly, safely, and suddenly, relieve you.

And you my friends, The Assessors, Collectors, &c. to whom is committed the Charge of Assessing and Levying such legal Taxes, upon your Neighbours and fellow-subjects, (For, without your Ayd, God knows, the Red-Coats are not able to force contribution, perhaps, from one single County,) Beware how ye act against the Law of the Land, the Liberty of your Countrey, the sense of the whole Nation: No Law compels you to so mean a Drudgery, No Salary tempts you. And will you, then, to curry favour with times, which may alter to morrow, undertake so barren, and thankless, so guilty, and Odious an employment? Have you Estates sufficient to answer the infinite Actions, to which you will be lyable in Law? Remember, That, Contribution payed to the Cavaliers was, indeed, purged from delinquency, by pleading the force, But to have Assessed, or collected for them, proved alwayes matter of sequestration, that being construed as a Voluntary Act; Consider the scandal, which (already, even in these times) Committee-men, Sequestrators, Excise-men, &c. have contracted, perhaps, to descend to their posterities; Read in stories, To what fury of the people, and rigour of Laws, publicanes, and other Ministers of Violence have been alwayes exposed, when the powers, by which they acted, ceased. Believe it, Freedom will soon break forth, the sooner, if you Obstruct it not, All things, by the special hand of providence, tend that way, And though other means should fail, Common exigence will prove a sure Card: Methinks you are not very safe, even as things now stand, The Collection of Taxes, not imposed by common consent in Parliament, (which, sure, you will not affirm to be, in this Case) being, (from a high Misdemeanour, branded by former Laws,) made the highest Treason, by a late solemn, and severe Act of their own: But, if times should alter, think, What will become of you? Will it not be your best refuge, to run your Countrey? Accursed be that future power, which protects, or indemnifies you. And now, I hope, enough is said for warning: If not, Mark the end, and take what comes of it,

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